



Grand Finale

ATCO DRAGWAY, ATCO, N. J.

Atco
Dragway
played host
to the final
meet of the
'66 NASCAR
drag season

photos by Jim Davis,
Chuck Altizer

ATCO DRAGWAY was the scene for the final big bash of the NASCAR circuit's first full season of competition. And it was a swinger of a meet, with a strong field of top iron.

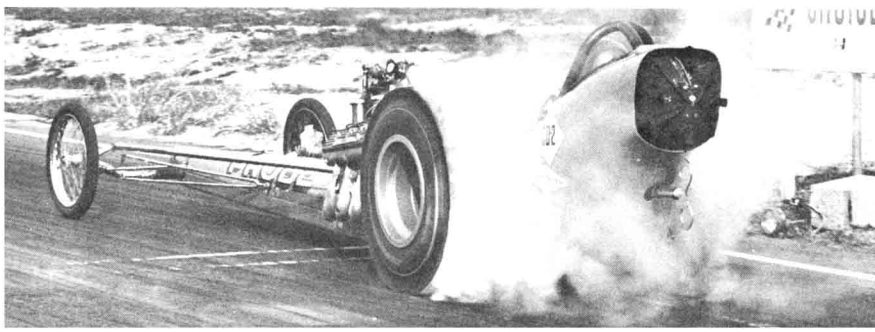
To avoid confusing the reader, this report will be separated into four Eliminator groups, as follows: Match Bash, Heads-Up, Handicap, and Top Fuel.

MATCH BASH

In Match Bash competition the hot stocks run fuel mixtures, as opposed to Grand Stock competition, where only gasoline is allowed. Once again, as he had in the Summer Championships at West Salem, Ohio, where he ran off with the same title, Hubert Platt proved that his driving and his super-boss fuel mixture was a winning combination. Platt, piloting the Dick Brannan-owned Mustang, had it in the bag right from the start.

In the first round Platt scrubbed Jimmy Keese of Philadelphia, Pa., with a howling 8.76-168.53. Dave





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1. Chuck Kurzawa drove the "Probe" to overall Top Fuel honors. 2. Dick Brannan, shown here winning to Dave Strickler's redlight, took Top Match Bash Eliminator. 3. Vernon Rowley drove his NHRA BIXS champion car to Heads-Up Eliminator gold. 4. Linda Vaughn, Miss Hurst Golden Shifter, arrived by helicopter, wowed the fans. BELOW—Melvin Yow drove the T. W. Grissom-Bob Banning Dodge to top honors for the year in NASCAR's Grand Stock points championship which ended with the Atco meet.



Strickler's Sting Ray was trailered next when Dave got anxious and red-lighted. Hubert's 9.14-164.23 took the win even though Dave had won the first round against Jeff Foulk at 9.08-162.16. Dave's 9.21 at 164.23 just wasn't quite good enough to beat the charging Platt. Hubert's final run against Shirl Greer was a blistering 8.87-163.00, strong enough to crown him King of the Match Bashers.

HEADS-UP ELIMINATOR

Heads-Up NASCAR competition is a gas bash with the handicaps forgotten, real may-the-fastest-win, belly-crawlin', commode-huggin' racing. For the fifth time this season, Vernon Rowley of Towson, Md., copped the title. Rowley, who won the opening Grand Stock meet six months ago, first blew off Gale Mortimer, driving the "Flintstone Flyer" Plymouth, with a 10.32-136.36 to Mortimer's 10.43-132.35.

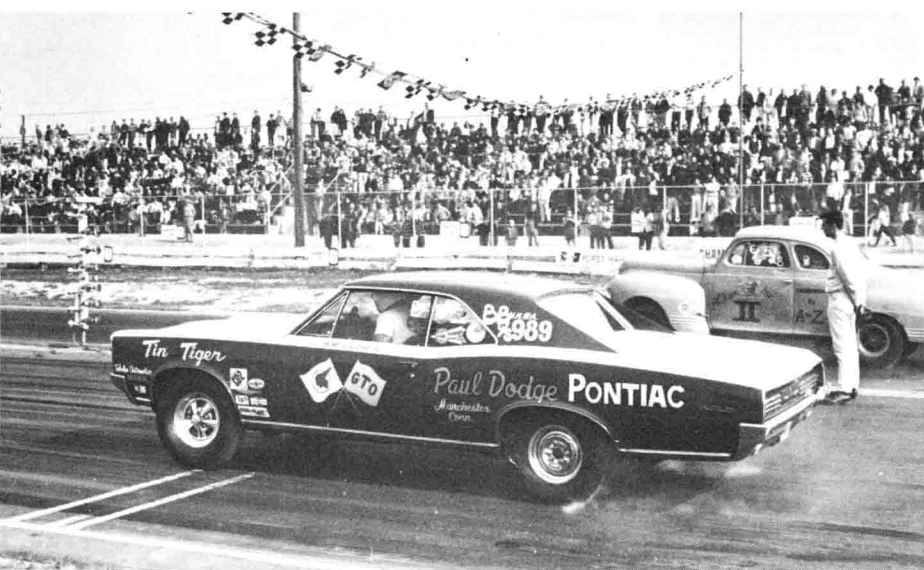
The second round brought Rowley against Dick Smith, who advanced when previous competition,

Carson Hyman, got a red light. Vernon's 10.24 was a cinch to win against Smith's 11.01.

Meanwhile, Dan Smoker and Al Joniec were battling it out. When Smoker's smoke cleared, he had Joniec, 10.68 to 10.79, winning him the opportunity to come up against Rowley for the final. Vernon's best run of the day was too good for Smoker, who turned in a 10.71-130.43 to Rowley's scorching 10.15-135.95.

HANDICAP ELIMINATOR

Chick DeNinno, who wound up eighth in NASCAR Grand Stock points, will be a man to watch next year. DeNinno, plagued with problems for most of the season, didn't come on strong until the closing weeks, when making up the necessary points was impossible. DeNinno copped Top Handicap Eliminator at the Atco, New Jersey, track by starting out in the first round by downing Tom Sneden of Hyattsville, Md., in a Dodge. Vernon Rowley was the next, to be trailered, followed by



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BELOW—Two regulars on the NASCAR Grand Stock circuit have at it. Daniel Smoker drives the "Big Red #2" Plymouth ultra stock while Sanford Kennedy handles a similar Dodge. BELOW CENTER—Dave Strickler pushes his "Match Bash" funny Corvette to the staging area.



TOP OF PAGE—Bob Gaudreau won BB/S with his '66 GTO. ABOVE—Petrillo Olds 442 ran well, narrowly lost class to Gaudreau's GTO. ABOVE RIGHT—Bob Harrop works on his '65 Dodge. RIGHT—Shirl Greer's "Tension" lost to the hard charging Hubert Platt in Dick Brannan's Mustang. BELOW—Hurst's Jim Kerr explains dragster's fine points to young fan.



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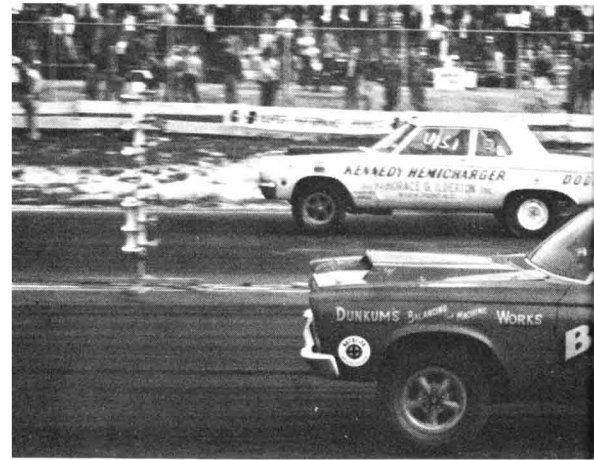
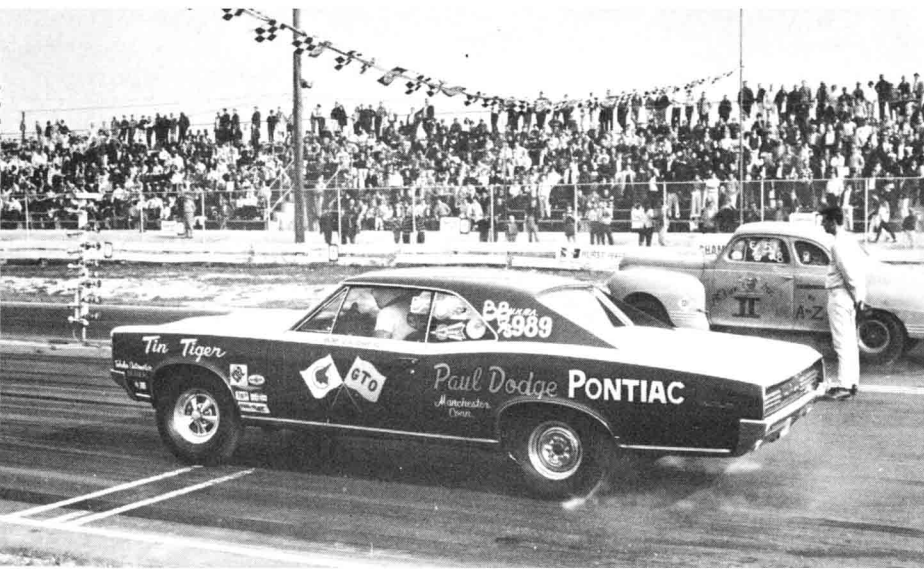
ELIMINATORS

#1	Chuck Kurzawa	Warren, Mich.
#2	Richard Broughton	Castleton, N. Y.
#3	Bob Lombardi	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mid. Stck.	Clayton Wright	Levittown, Pa.
Jr. Stck.	Tom Kidd	Macungie, Pa.

CLASS WINNERS

CLASS	NAME	HOME	E.T.	MPH
AA/SA	Clayton B. Wright	Levittown, Pa.	11.83	119.84
M/S	Jos. McGinnis	Bedford, Pa.	17.43	77.18
A/S	Brown & Walker	Arlington, Va.	12.17	116.88
BB/2	Bob DePersia	Delran, N. J.	14.09	102.15
F/SA	Bill Hadden	Va. Beach, Va.	15.85	89.73
B/Sports	John Anselmo	Philadelphia, Pa.	12.62	110.12
B/S	Max Sterling	Tacoma Park, Md.	12.73	109.56
E/S	C & D Specer	Baltimore, Md.	13.46	103.44
D/S	Ron Stokey	Cleveland, Ohio	12.65	109.63
G/SA	YOO HOO Beverage Co.	Red Bank, N. J.	14.66	94.46
FF/SA	Ron Jeffree	Collingswood, N. J.	14.51	80.35
D/2	Greg Manawski	Franklinville, N. J.	14.67	96.77
G/Sports	Bechtel & Sinistri	Reading, Pa.	12.01	114.79
N/S	Kennedy & Worrell	Philadelphia, Pa.	17.46	77.61
J/S	Al Cavanaugh	Philadelphia, Pa.	15.78	85.63
AA/S	Kauffman Bros.	Christana, Pa.	12.28	115.38
FF/S	Thos. Kidd	Masungie, Pa.	13.14	102.85
BB/SA	Richard Horley	Glassboro, N. J.	13.86	102.15
H/S	Andy Kish	Trenton, N. J.	14.60	94.73
D/A	Seabrook & Gray	Indegeton, N. J.	11.11	128.02
A/Comp	John Button	Chittenango, N. Y.	11.16	123.28
B/A	Gene Mori	Brandywine, Md.	11.09	123.79
I/SA	R. Comaway	Philadelphia, Pa.	—	75.63
D/FD	Ken Hammond	Alexandria, Va.	10.51	135.73
AA/G	Rich Nroughton	Castleton, N. Y.	9.34	165.74
AA/D	S. Eintch Hackimer	Brookline, N. Y.	8.58	173.41
A/MSP	Cal Johnson	Millville, N. J.	11.49	130.43
AA/S	Clayton B. Wright	Levittown, Pa.	11.87	104.65
B/FD	John Peaico	Erie, Pa.	9.47	—
HS/A	Simon-Biebel	Lake Hiawatha, N. J.	15.31	90.09
D/MS	Jay Kalmus	Lake Hiawatha, N. J.	13.24	105.75
B/MS	McCarty & Jones	Newport News, Va.	12.03	115.75
C/MS	William Dickson	Lindenwald, N. J.	13.18	104.65
C/GS	Vincent Tarantola	Queens, N. Y.	11.18	126.64
C/S	Gene Holt	Richmond, Va.	12.86	106.64
CS/S	Clarence Carter	Salem, N. J.	14.95	96.46
H/S	Melcher Racing Team	Bally, Pa.	13.49	101.12
A/A	Wally Lynn	Woodbridge, N. J.	9.85	154.30
D/G	Kostin & Christian	Drexel Hill, Pa.	12.44	111.11
E/G	Bob Paz	Medley Park, Pa.	13.21	107.13
B/G	Doug Coenen	Hampton, Pa.	11.74	121.52
B/GS	Bob Lombardi	Brooklyn, N. Y.	10.91	64.74
EM/ST	Tom Munchpak	Cornivell Hts., Pa.	—	56.25
M/S	Ken Worrell	Philadelphia, Pa.	16.81	81.08
A/MS	Rossoni & Colley	Wayland, Ohio	11.16	123.38
B/DF	Clyde Harnish	Stutten, N. Y.	9.62	157.89
BB/A	Bill Pries	Kearney, N. J.	10.05	148.76
A/G	Tony Teil	Hanover, N. J.	10.75	130.43
BB/GS	Eastern Automotive	Brooklyn, N. Y.	10.96	121.95
SW/SP	James Amole	Springtiety, Pa.	9.14	164.83

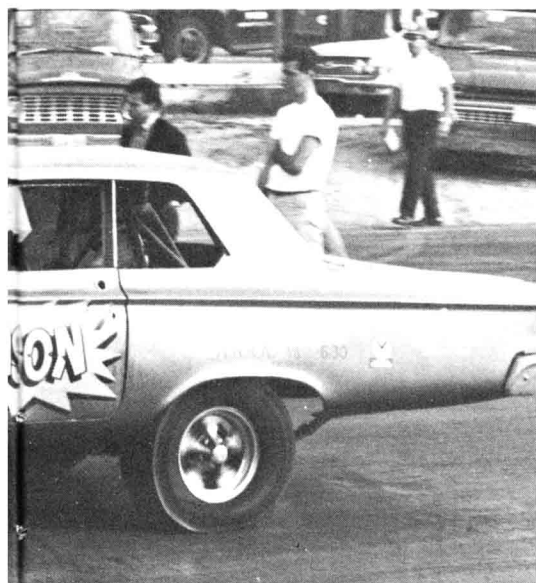
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Sam Auxier, Jr., one of DeNinno's teammates.

DeNinno's hot set-up didn't start to function until the next-to-last meet of the season at Suffolk, Va., when his team's Comet, piloted by Sam Auxier, Jr. took top honors. DeNinno, driving the team '66 Dodge, collected the most important win of his career at the grande finale Atco meet. With better luck next year, he should be battling it out right down to the wire with such outstanding drivers as Melvin Yow and Paul Moody, who finished one and two in Grand Stock points this year.

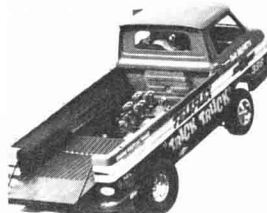
Yow, who has had a season-long battle for the Grand Stock cham-

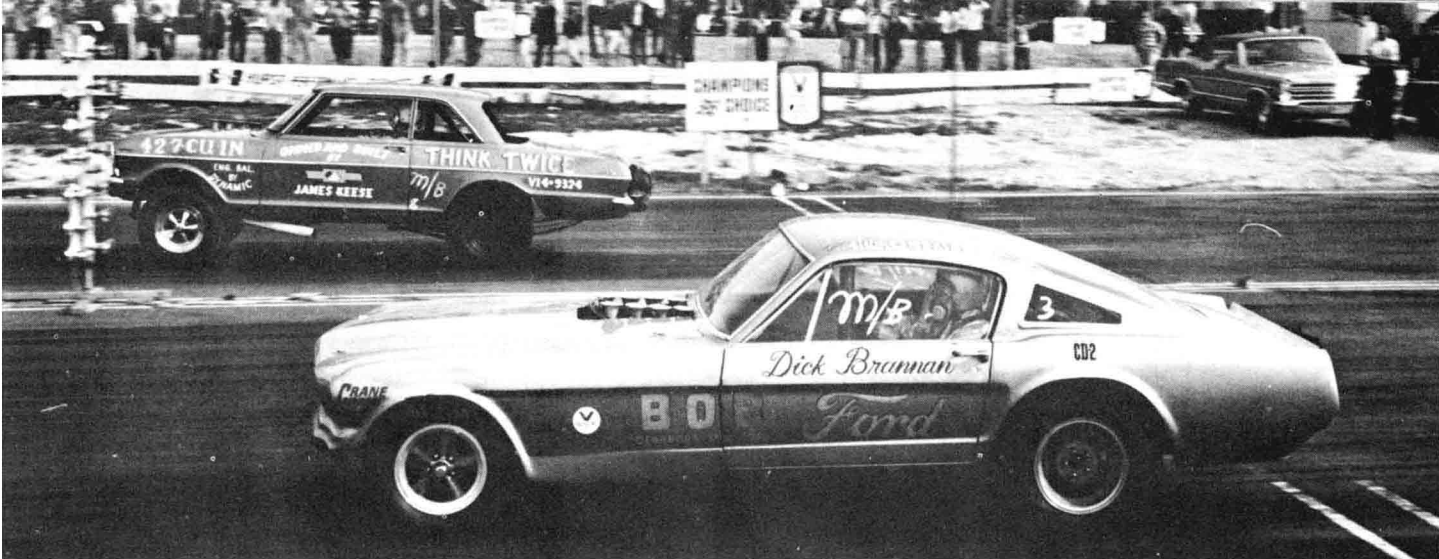


ABOVE - Two Knafel Pontiac cars grudge race in time trials. RIGHT - Shirl Greer nailed Bob Harrop in second round of Match Bash. BELOW LEFT - Chick DeNinno downs teammate Sam Auxier Jr. on his way to Handicap Stock Eliminator. BELOW RIGHT - Norm Phillips FFIS Chevy. BOTTOM - Vogelsong & Kitchen AA/FD.



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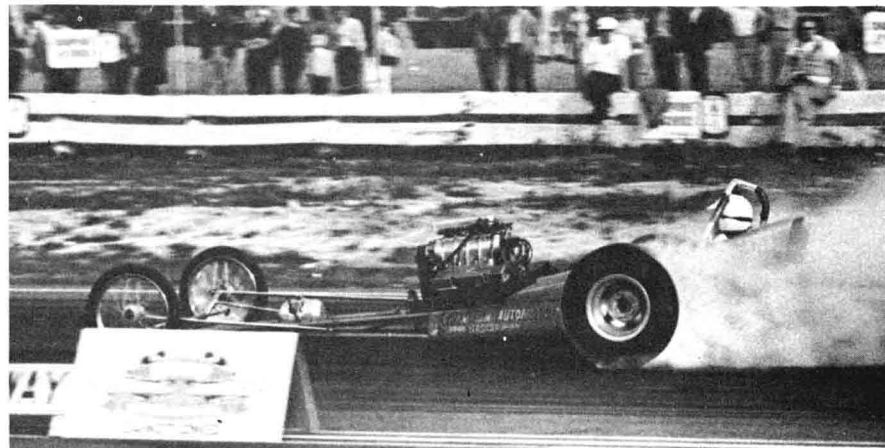
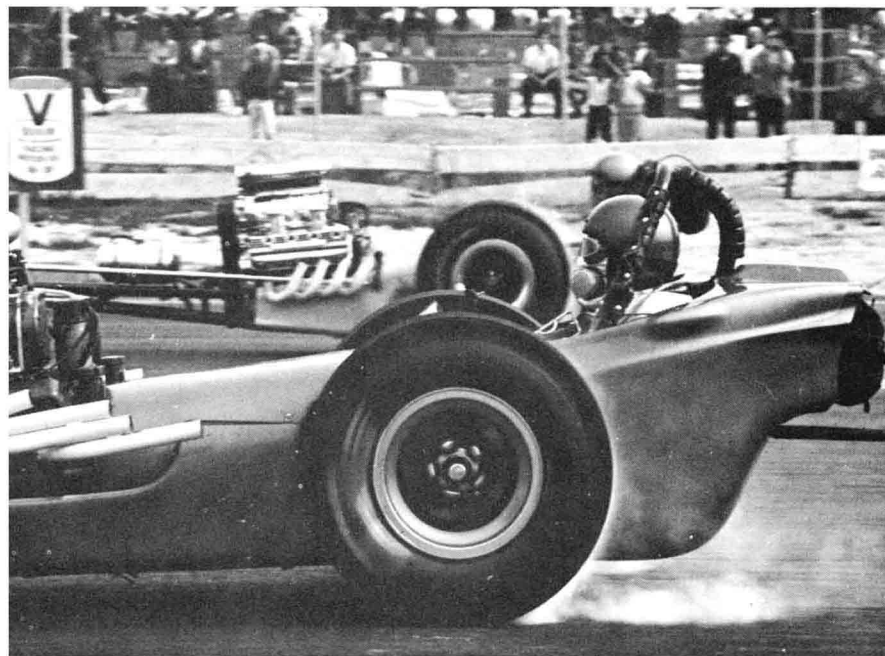
pionship, beat Bill Nugent of Kenosha, Wisconsin, in the first round, which was enough to assure him of the championship, even though Melvin was beaten in his second round match against Dick Smith, who went against DeNinno for the final in Handicap Eliminator. Yow's nearest threat to the crown was Paul Moody of Belleville, Michigan, but when Moody fell to Dave Lyall in the first round, while Yow won against Nugent, the points went to Melvin, 790 for the season to Moody's 700. Carson Hyman, with 560 points, was third.

TOP FUEL ELIMINATOR

The cream of the NASCAR fuelers were on hand for the last chance to settle season-long scores. Chuck Kurzawa, driving Lou Smith's Chrysler-powered rail, "The Probe," worked his way to victory and the Top Fuel Eliminator title. It was a well-deserved win for hard-driving Kurzawa, whose ambitions to attain the elusive title had not been realized prior to this meet, in spite of the many impressive runs he had made during the season.

"The Probe's" first round, against Ray Marsh, was a milk run at 8.01-195.22. The second rounds saw Kurzawa get down to business and trailer Al Daurenheim with a 7.55-203.16. That brought him up against Don Gunther, who pulled the big red eye. For the final run and the title, "The Probe" got small in the distance with a blistering 7.55-203.60 against "The Guzler's" 7.71-198.22.

Chuck Hepler, who started off in a most spectacular manner (7.52-206.42 for the most sizzling et and speed of the meet) didn't need all that go when his competition, George Reese, red-lighted. Hepler's engine wouldn't take any more after that blast and he fell to Joe Jacono



in the second round. Jacono turned 7.74-182.18 that round but was subjected to Hepler's fate in the next to last round, when he came up against "The Guzler" which sailed down the quarter at 7.62-200.88. ■

TOP OF PAGE—James Keese gets a good start on Hubert Platt in the first round of MB, but his lead was short-lived. The Mustang went 8.76-168.53 for the win. ABOVE CENTER—Two fuelers head for pay dirt at the other end of the quarter. ABOVE—Tom Raley broke the Champion Automotive fueler on the first round.